

St. John's College, Pinkney Hall
College Avenue
Annapolis
Anne Arundel County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-275

*HABS
MD,
2-ANNA,
63-*

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS
MD,
2-ANNA,
63-

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Maryland	COUNTY Anne Arundel	TOWN OR VICINITY Annapolis
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) St. John's College, Pinkney Hall		HABS NO. MD-275
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) College Avenue		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1855-57	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Nathan G. Starkweather	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) A mid-nineteenth century college dormitory largely preserved in its original form.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Vaguely Romanesque Revival		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Brick laid in all-stretcher bond. Brick bearing exterior walls and major partitions.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Rectangular, four stories, about 40' x 95'. First floor; there are two lateral halls connected by a central longitudinal hall, forming an H from which rooms (cont'd. p.2)		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Buttresses of brick, 3'6" wide by 1'11" deep, which separate the bays; window openings which are segmental arched, except those of the second story which are semi-circular; paired windows with wood columns at the jambs and mullion, set within (cont'd. p.2)		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES 1860-65 served as part of the Troop Hospital at St. John's. 1942 chimney tower removed. Interior modernized to comply with the demands of modern dorm living.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Men's Dormitory		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE Pinkney Hall was named for William Pinkney, minister to England and Russia, Attorney General under Madison, and member of the State Legislature. Pinkney protested the Legislature's withdrawal of College funding in 1805, an action which (cont'd. p.2)		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) <u>Building File</u> , Registrar's Office, St. John's College, Annapolis. <u>Minutes of the Board of Visitors and Governors of St. John's College</u> , 1854-1856, Hall of Records, Annapolis. (Cont'd. p.2)		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Eleni Silverman from reports submitted by: Florence Dunbar (Oct. 1964) and Harley J. McKee (August 13, 1964).		DATE 3/9/84

SHAPE AND DIMENSION OF STRUCTURE (CONT'D):

open toward each side. Upper floors: similar to the first in plan, except that the two halves are not connected.

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (CONT'D):

semi-circular arched two story openings (central bay southeast end); hip roof; narrow gable at the center of each side; sheet metal roof; corbel cornice of brick

OTHER INFORMATION APPROPRIATE (CONT'D):

endeared him to the college.

For further historical information on the construction of the dormitory see data pages 3-5.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Including listing on National Register, State Registers, Etc.)
(CONT'D):

Forbes Collection of Photographs #168, #181 and #846 (with a battalion in front).

18.CONT'D: PINKNEY HALL: ADDITIONAL NOTES

Section I: Messrs. Spragle and Caulk, the contractors for Pinkney Hall, were dissatisfied with the progress of the building and in May of 1857 wrote a letter of complaint to the Board of Governors and Visitors of the college, stating that they had already spent considerably more than their estimated cost of construction, primarily due to the lack of cooperation from the architect.

The architect had not supplied any of the drawings on schedule, and when they did arrive it was found that the specifications, both in design and building materials, were substantially altered from the original plans on which the contractors had based their estimate. The firm of Messrs. Spragle and Caulk had incurred additional expenses for labor, many of their men having come from the Baltimore area and requiring retaining fees to remain in the Annapolis area during the winter when work on the building was forced to a halt due to inclement weather. (Letter to the Board of Visitors and Governors of St John's College, from Messrs. Spragle and Caulk, 22 May, 1857, St John's College, Letters to, Hall of Records, Annapolis).

The minutes of the Board have been lost (1851-1857) and there is no other record indicating the Board's action on this letter. Surviving notes on the minutes, taken by the secretary during meetings, do, however, give an indication of the Board's original intentions for completions of work:

5 March, 1855: Messrs. Randall, Claude, and Worthington, Building Committee: Said committee presented sundry plans for the buildings which gave rise to discussion and several sites having been mentioned without any determination of the Board in respect either to plans or sites.

5 March, 1855: Additional members appointed to the building committee: Judge Tuck
Mr. Stockett

April, 1855: A letter to the Board from President Humphreys, requesting that a decision be reached relative to site and plans, particularly for the new dormitory. Humphreys hoped that actual

construction could begin in 1856, to be completed in time for opening of the fall term of 1857.

There is no existing record of the exact date of completion of Pinkney Hall. J.G. Proud, in his eulogy on Humphreys (dec. January 1857) delivered on 5 August 1857, speaks of the Hall as "just erected and as yet nameless". The college circular for 1856-1857 mentions the building as "a fine large edifice" that would have accommodations for about one hundred students besides suites for assistant professors and tutors, but which was not completed.

29 December, 1857: Minutes of the Board of Visitors and Governors: Resolved: That the Building Committee be authorized to draw on the Treasurer for such funds as may be required to make the pavements, enclosures, and other necessary preparations for the new College Buildings out of any unappropriated money not exceeding five hundred dollars.

It may be assumed that the building was nearly completed if work was to begin on pavements and enclosures. The formal dedication of the building occurred at the Commencement Exercises, 1858. According to the Maryland Gazette, 29 July, 1858: "The new college building will be set apart for its high purposes under the style and title of Pinkney Hall with a Religious Service and addresses." A Full band was to play and in the afternoon there was to be a dress parade on the College Green. That evening a Commencement Ball was held in Pinkney Hall, the first dance of any kind ever to be held at the College.

Section II: Further comment on Pinkney Hall, by T. F. Tilghman may be considered of interest:

The new dormitory, projected as the other part of the building program, was by no means a fulfillment of a need; it was, rather, a gamble on futurities. The boarding house of 1835 (Humphreys Hall) had been built to accommodate fifty students, and this had been ample for the student body of the time.

In spite of Humphreys' best efforts the College had grown only very slowly. During the years 1850-55 enrollment averages 82, and by 1858 it had increased only to 104. Consequently, a new building was an expression of hope rather than a necessity. (Tilghman, T F, An Early Victorian College: St John's, Maryland Historical Magazine, XIV, Dec. 1949).